



U. S. SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

FRESNO DISTRICT OFFICE
801 R Street, Suite 201
FRESNO, CALIFORNIA 93721
559-487-5791 • 559-487-5636 (FAX)

Date: March 5, 2012

Dear Entrepreneur:

The local SBA district office has been funded to host another year of our acclaimed **e200/ Emerging 200 initiative**. In 2011 SBA, a member of the federal Strong Cities, Strong Communities initiative in Fresno, inaugurated the program in collaboration with several local partners. Working with 16 of the most talented and dedicated business owners in Fresno, the results of the first graduation class simply exceeded our expectations. These businesses are now poised and prepared for growth, and are making a tremendous impact as the result of taking this growth-proven copyrighted business development curriculum.

We are currently accepting applications for our 2012 class which will start April 25, 2012. We have included information regarding the program and ask that you consider applying for this training program. In addition, please let your clients, customer and community contacts know that SBA is currently enrolling business owners into our 2012 program which will be offered again totally without any cost to the participant.

The goal of the program is to identify 17 businesses in Fresno that show a high potential for growth and to provide them with the networks, resources and motivation required to build a sustainable business of size and scale. The program's business model follows a growth-proven curriculum called *StreetWise Steps™* which has interactive learning and networking components. The curriculum is owned and taught by Interise, a prominent non-profit out of Boston. Small businesses located within the City of Fresno are especially encouraged to apply.

As a reminder, our eligibility criteria include:

- ✓ In business for at least 3 years
- ✓ Between \$400,000 and \$10 million in annual revenue
- ✓ At least one full time employee besides the owner
- ✓ Interested in growth
- ✓ The business is in good financial shape and does not face tax, legal or other significant challenges

We look forward to identifying another class of high-growth firms that will contribute to this Region's economy. Deadline for application submission is March 23, 2012. Should you have any questions please contact Lupe Cota, e200 Coordinator or me at 559/ 487-5791.

Sincerely,

Carlos G. Mendoza
District Director
Fresno District Office



Q & A

1. **What is e200?** SBA, a federal partner under the Strong Cities, Strong Communities initiative, will offer again its e200 Curriculum to about 17 small businesses in Fresno. The curriculum is based under a copyrighted program called the StreetWise Steps to Small Business Growth™. The curriculum gives small business owners an opportunity to gain knowledge and experience through a combination of 1) academic developed curriculum; 2) practical tips based on “real-life” business experience, and; 3) advice from business leaders that can be readily applied. Interise a prominent non-profit out of Boston owns the program and its instructors will teach the class.
2. **Is e200 offered in all SBA district offices?** E200 is currently offered in only 17 urban host cities including Fresno. Fresno is the only urban community in California to offer e200 to the general small business population.
3. **What will the StreetWise Steps Curriculum™ cover?** There are five modules that will be covered in class. Module 1: Business and Strategy Assessment. Module 2: Financials. Module 3: Marketing and Sales. Module 4: Resources- People, Accessing Capital and Government Contracting. Module 5: Putting it all together- Strategic Growth Plan Presentations.
4. **Is there a cost?** Program is offered totally free by SBA to the participating small businesses. Please note that the same curriculum is currently being offered to Boston area businesses for several thousand dollars by the same non-profit. Again, there is no cost to take the program in Fresno.
5. **What are a Small Business’ Commitments to e200?** The educational program will begin on April 25, 2012 and end in November 2012. Participants will be in class for 40 hours of instruction time, divided over 13 class sessions. Classes are typically held every other week. Participants will also spend at least 12 hours in self-directed CEO mentoring groups. Out-of-class pre-sessions preparation will be at least 40 hours. All instructional approaches-classes, CEO Mentoring Groups and self paced learning are interconnected and of equal importance. In total, each participant can expect to commit approximately 100 hours during the training.
6. **How many classes can entrepreneurs miss and still get a certificate?** To receive a certificate students can miss no more than two classroom sessions. If a participant misses more than two classes, they will be encouraged to continue to attend the classes for learning but may not receive a certificate for completing e200.
7. **What will the Small Business get out of e200?** There are no guarantees, but the statistics of those businesses completing the curriculum speak for themselves. A survey was conducted of 2008-2010 executives and the following were the results.
 - Respondents grew their revenues by 60%
 - Respondents created 275 net new jobs in 2010 with an average job creation rate of .87 jobs/business.
 - Nearly half of the participants secured federal, state, local and tribal contracts with a cumulative total of \$287 million.
 - Participants accessed over \$7.2 million in new financing.
8. **What are the timeframes?** Applications are due to SBA no later than March 23, 2012. Applications are reviewed for eligibility as they are received. An interview will be scheduled. Finalists will be selected by April 1st. E200 classes will begin on April 25th. Venue for training is SBA district office, 801 R Street, Fresno.
9. **I have additional questions, who shall I contact?** Contact SBA as follows.
 - Lupe Cota at 559/487-5791 ext 2702 lupe.cota@sba.gov
 - Carlos Mendoza at 559/487-5791 ext 2710 carlos.mendoza@sba.gov
 - Peter Estrada at 559/487-5791 ext 2703 peter.estrada@sba.gov



I'm interested in being an e200 Emerging Leaders participant!

BUSINESS NAME: _____

OWNER/PRESIDENT/CEO NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

DAYTIME PHONE: _____

FAX NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____@_____

BUSINESS WEB PAGE: WWW. _____

Briefly describe your business including the number of full-time staff you have and your annual revenues for 2011 (use additional pages if necessary):

Briefly describe your interest in the e200 Emerging Leaders Initiative. How did you hear about e200? (use additional pages if necessary):

To determine whether the e200 Emerging Leaders Program is right for you please check off all that apply:

- ☐ My business has been established for at least three (3) years and is beyond the start-up phase.
- ☐ My business generates between \$400,000 and \$10 million in annual gross revenue.
- ☐ My business has more than one full-time person on the payroll besides the owner.
- ☐ My business is in good financial shape and it does not face tax, legal or other significant burdens outside of my company's control.
- ☐ I am the owner or the key decision maker of the qualified business (i.e. CEO, Owner, President)
- ☐ I commit to invest in the program approx. 100 hours within 7 months and fully participate in all pre class assignments.

Please return to the U.S. Small Business Administration Fresno District Office no later than March 23, 2012.

By Mail: U.S. Small Business Administration, Fresno District Office

801 R Street, Suite 201

OR

Fresno, CA 93721

By FAX: 559/487-5636

By EMAIL: lupe.cota@sba.gov

Completion of this form is an indication of your interest in the e200 Emerging Leaders program and does not guarantee that your firm will be an e200 Emerging Leaders participant. Enrollment is limited and will be processed as received once SBA determines the applicant meets all qualifications. It is anticipated that the first class will begin on April 25, 2012. SBA reserves the right to select the best qualified firms.

Are you interested in receiving additional information on other SBA products and services to help your business succeed? Yes _____ No _____

Co-sponsorship Authorization : SBA's participation in this co-sponsored activity is not an endorsement of the views, opinions, products or services of any co-sponsor or other person or entity. All SBA programs and services are extended to the public on a nondiscriminatory basis. Reasonable arrangements for persons with disabilities will be made if requested at least two weeks in advance.

For Questions please contact SBA at 559/487-5791 ext 2702 or via EMAIL at lupe.cota@sba.gov